The Commonweal

A Weekly Review of Literature, The Arts and Public Affairs

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THE CAMPAIGN—AND THE CRISIS

NOW THAT President Roosevelt in his acceptance speech at Philadelphia has told the American people what in his opinion is the dominant issue of the 1936 campaign, it only remains for Governor Landon, in his acceptance speech, to do likewise, and from that point onward to the November elections there will follow a political struggle as momentous as any recorded in the history of the United States. Nor will that struggle be definitely decided in November; that, it seems to us, is impossible. For the political struggle is only part of a profounder social struggle—in part economic, in part philosophical—which cannot be decisively settled by the political victory or defeat of either the Democratic or the Republican party. When we say that there is a philosophical element of the social struggle, we mean that fundamental, and fundamentally antagonistic, views of human life and its deepest values are now vitally awake in the minds of millions of Americans, by which they are shaping their political efforts; views which are far more dynamic than the ordinary motives of party loyalties, and party advantages. These views may or may not be the predominant factors in deciding the election; but certainly they will be the predominant factors in maintaining the social struggle far beyond the elections, and, in all probability, for many years to come. For this nation, being part, and a very great and important part, of humanity, cannot escape participation in the world crisis of humanity.

It seems to us that the President's speech has brought the nation to a realization of its state of crisis. He called attention to the "clouds of suspicion, tides of ill-will and intolerance" which "gather darkly in many places. . . . In our own land we enjoy, indeed, a fullness of life greater than that of most nations. But the rush of modern civilization itself has raised new difficulties, new problems, which must be solved if we are to pre-

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serve the political and economic freedom for which Washington and Jefferson planned and fought." And he then proceeded to tell the nation that since the early days of the republic, after it had won political liberty from the political autocracy of the eighteenth-century royalists who held special privileges from the crown of England, it has fallen under the subjection of an economic and financial autocracy—"an industrial dictatorship." "A small group had concentrated into their own hands an almost complete control over other people's property, other people's money, other people's labor, other people's lives. For too many of us life was no longer free; liberty no longer real; men could no longer follow the pursuit of happiness."

The collapse of 1929, with all the frightful disasters that followed the crash, revealed, so the President declared, the new economic despotism for what it was. "The election of 1932 was the people's mandate to end it. Under that mandate it is being ended." Government in a modern civilization "has certain inescapable obligations to its citizens, among which are the protection of the family and the home, the establishment of a democracy of opportunity, and aid to those overtaken by disaster." The government elected in 1932 has recognized those obligations and sought to realize them. "For more than three years we have fought for them." This fight, the President pledged, will go on. "It is not alone a war against want and destitution and economic demoralization. It is a war for the survival of democracy. We are fighting to save a great and precious form of government for ourselves and for the world."

As we go to press, it is too soon to be able to judge the national response to the President's utterance in any full measure. Probably, indeed, that response cannot be adequately determined until the elections. But even the few expressions of editorial opinions now available indicate that the exceedingly grave nature of the central issue as laid down by President Roosevelt is being generally recognized. The New York *Herald Tribune,* for example, believes that "if one is to take the President as actually meaning what he says," his speech assumes startling significance. "For it announces a fundamental philosophy of life and politics which is in marked contrast to that which has hitherto governed in American affairs." The President "charges forward toward a drastically enlarged vision of the rôle of government in our affairs under a banner of class hatred." The Louisville *Courier-Journal* believes that "the President has lifted the issue onto a high moral plane and at the same time onto a high plane of intellect." The Philadelphia *Inquirer* considers that "the New Deal is not American. Even the President's spectacular appearance at Franklin Field, as a smashing climax to a week of political hysteria and ballyhoo, savored rather of Nazism than of Americanism." The Detroit *Free Press* thinks that "if the speech is a promise of what the New Deal campaign is to be, it will become essentially an appeal to the ignoble passions, to prejudice, jealousy, greed, envy and hatred. And along with this the country may also expect subtle propaganda for a form of centralized authority indicative of the leadership of Herr Hitler rather than Thomas Jefferson." But in the opinion of the New York *World-Telegram,* the President's speech was "one of the greatest orations in our nation's history." Yet "he is reviled by those who have been the 'invisible government,' who would destroy him because he challenges their power and who are too blind to realize that in the final analysis he is the best insurance they have against the complete extinction of a system [capitalism] the very life of which their abuse has threatened."

So far as the newspapers are concerned, the greater weight of opinion is opposed not merely to the President but to his whole thesis. These newspapers contend that the employment of government as an agency of the "economic democracy" advocated by the President utterly contradicts the "American way of life," and opens the door to collectivist tyranny by government.

This is the issue. As we have said repeatedly, it is an issue on which Catholic opinion is as badly divided as the opinion of other sections of the population. Yet it remains true that the highest teaching authority in the Catholic Church, the Pope, has declared that the main evils of modern society in the sphere of economics are precisely those evils denounced by President Roosevelt. "Free competition and still more economic domination must be kept within just and definite limits, and must be brought under the effective control of the public authority, in matters appertaining to the latter's competence. The public institutions of the nations must be such as to make the whole of human sociey conform to the common good, namely, to the standard of social justice. . . ." So wrote Pius XI. He also says, in the same encyclical letter, that today "not alone is wealth accumulated, but immense power and despotic economic domination is concentrated in the hands of a few." Moreover, those who hold this despotic economic domination "are frequently not the owners, but only the trustees and directors of invested funds, who administer them at their good pleasure." Furthermore, "this concentration of power has led to a threefold struggle for domination," which seeks "dictatorship in the economic sphere itself." And that government has not only the right but the strict duty, in moral law, to correct these evils, is also taught by the Head of the Church. How to apply the moral law to the American crisis is the practical question to be faced by all American Catholics. We invite our readers to write us on this supreme question of today.

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Week by Week

WHEN the Democrats left Philadelphia, they took with them a really important achievement and a genuinely significant political query. The first was an endorsement of Mr. Roosevelt which transcended the merely occasional, grandiose though that was, and accepted his leadership even in hotly contested matters. Seldom has a convention been so impressively a personal affair. The platform is obviously of the President's making—so obviously, in fact, that the relatively non-committal generalities of his acceptance speech were enough to set it off in clear relief. But possibly the political query is of more immediate practical importance. Do the chances favor a second overwhelming Democratic victory in New York? On this topic the party leadership hardly disguised its anxiety. Pleas to Governor Herbert S. Lehman to run again were so insistent that they focused attention upon underlying partizan trends which even the various "polls" hardly test adequately. New York State happens to be a composite of many different things. It is both a commonwealth of traditional party affiliations, and a battle-ground on which new formations are quick to appear. Inner Democratic rifts are also most plainly visible here. Liberalism, reaction, Communism, Coughlinism, factionalism—all are so well represented that only an exceedingly daring prophet would undertake to predict the outcome. And the query as to what will happen is immensely interesting because it is the real question in this campaign. To what points have we arrived collectively during the past four years of ideological turmoil? Does the citizen have a clear notion of what he wants? Is there a political group which satisfactorily formulates these desires? Mr. Roosevelt has never left anyone in doubt that he is a shrewd political diagnostician. Has he found the common denominator again? It is immensely significant that even Democrats are not sure.

The Trend of Events

TIMES of civic experiment and debate invariably witness the formation of many minority groups some of which yearn to find political expression. But under a two-party system it is almost impossible to induce voters to cast ballots for candidates sure to be swamped under. A way out of this difficulty is offered by the proportional representation idea, which in one manner or another affords minorities some representation in government. Recently not a few groups have sponsored it. One of the most important of these is doubtless the Women's City Club of New York, which has issued a primer advocating proportional representation for the metropolis. Under these circumstances a word of caution is doubtless in order. A generation ago nearly all progressive statesmen and theorists believed that the State could best assure itself of what public opinion desired by encouraging the development of small parties. They held that people would be best satisfied with a democracy which afforded everybody a chance to vote for precisely what he wanted. The Weimar Constitution, which was an attempt to embody the best in government experience, adopted proportional representation for Germany. Other states were almost equally interested in it, notably France and Belgium. But seen in retrospect, the experiment seems to have failed. Today it is the defender of democratic institutions in Central Europe who is the most vigorous critic; and it may be added that he began to be both vigorous and critical some years before the proportional representation system had demonstrably aided Hitler. In France many of the most-forward-looking are likewise opposed. To be brief: so much evidence has been accumulated against the workability and desirability of proportional representation that we do not quite see how it can be advocated here as a valuable adjunct to democracy.

Proportional Representation

YEARS ago Count Keyserling complimented French women on being disinterested in the franchise. He declared they were almost the only women whose social power and inner stability made it unnecessary to think in terms of the ballot. But a change is manifestly setting in. When Parisian suffragettes can hold up a horse race at Longchamps and get themselves pursued by an army of photographers, it is well to surmise that the male will not for long be sole master of the Gallic ballot-box. After the war, institutions of higher learning began to make room for women; and therewith, one might well reason, began the slow but inevitable trek toward political influence. But the disturbance in France goes deeper than all this. It is based upon much dissatisfaction with existing situations merely because they exist; but it is also the outcome of criticism to which French educational and marriage methods have been subjected. Periodicals are issuing complete numbers devoted to feminism, one of which (the last number of *Esprit*) contains much at which an American reader can only smile, so antiquated does it seem. Naturally it may be argued that the French could have done worse than remain old-fashioned in this regard. Across the Rhine a vast army of women, after having first of all cast the majority of Hitler's ballots, have purred contentedly while being nudged back into their kitchens. In Italy, where the warrior now struts about impressively, the

French Suffragettes

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régime does not have to worry about its feminine support. So strange are these things. All is plain as day while one debates whether women ought to be allowed to vote. Of course they should! But the real trouble, the confusing and revolutionary trouble, is something else entirely and about it many volumes have been written to no avail.

Glory Passeth Away

TIME has now made it a hallowed custom that the Sovereign Pontiff should go, on the night of the vigil of the feast of Saints Peter and Paul, to the crypts which hold the tombs of his predecessors. The first Peter, tradition says, is buried beneath the vast basilica, where silence reigns within closed doors as the Pope goes to meditate upon the calm and judgment which are alike in death. This year the aged Pius XI knelt in prayer beside the grave of him he succeeded; and he must have witnessed in a swift and impressive panorama the years which have since passed—years during which the glory and sorrow of all human life were intensified for him who represented also the life of the Church. For they have occasionally been luminous with achievement, these speeding seasons, and often very dark, stormy even. But what are two decades in the presence of the Petrine tomb? It is not so much the actual, corporal preservation of that grave for hundreds, maybe nearly thousands, of years. The Sovereign Pontiff knows that the great basilica above him was once not, and may again not be. He realizes that Rome itself, the Eternal, might some day suffer the fate of the cities of Byzantium. But the tide that came out of Galilee with Peter is the sea. And also the rock which holds that sea in its hands. These are the things that matter, because they are not of man's creation. And yet the work man has accomplished within the holy places is so significant, so matchlessly beautiful! If silence not of the grave but of destruction ever hovered over Rome, is it likely that man would develop the courage to attempt civilization again?

Making It a Pleasure

THE INVENTOR of the device just reported from England for making dental patients feel secure, and hence properly relaxed, is at least as ingenious a psychologist as he is a mechanician. We all know that what keeps us on tenterhooks in the dentist's chair is not so much fear of pain as fear of the dentist. We take that grim seat in the knowledge that we shall have to bear pain, and if our due share of it, little or much, could only be indicated to us beforehand, we should come through for the most part like heroes. Instead, every detail of the experience contributes to our conviction of being at the mere mercy of someone with the power to hurt us very much. And if our confidence in a particular dentist's character is such that we do not believe he will hurt us wantonly (and strict truth demands the admission that many dentists seem to be moral men), we still believe he will hurt us carelessly; that he does not always know when, or how hard, he is hurting us, and hence that he starts hurting us before there is any need to, and continues to hurt us after the need has ceased. Many dentists have tried rational methods to rid their patients of this persuasion—the appeal, for instance, to their own (the dentists') knowledge of nerve structure and their own tried skill—of course to no avail. The fine little gadget from London reassures the patient directly, by making it possible for him to record his own moment-to-moment sensations. A stop-light control is put in his hand, whereby he can illuminate a tiny signal-box strapped to his shoulder: a red light for "stop," an amber for "caution," a green for "go." Of course, before this really admirable device is finally established, there will be the incidental casualties—those who mistakenly flash amber or green for red. But with these difficulties adjusted, the invention should have a future. In London, it is said, patients now feel so much confidence from the fact of being able to stop the drill at will that they do not stop it at all.

The *Dublin* Centenary

HERE'S a cheer for the good old *Dublin Review,* not yet quite a hundred years old though the centenary number (and an excellent one it is) has appeared. No other journal so well spans the years during which the modern Catholic intellectual revival in England took form. It was Cardinal Wiseman who joined forces with Daniel O'Connell to establish a medium for the discussion of religion. Becomingly enough, the *Review* was usually solid and philosophical. There was just once—during Shane Leslie's editorship—that literary grace acquired the upper hand: generally the mood which led to the non-appearance of Francis Thompson's Shelley essay during many years was dominant. But, as everyone knows who has tried to study the history of English Catholicism, the files of the *Dublin* are not merely mines of scholarly treasure. They remain distinguished, as the files of the *Retrospective Review* and the *Gentleman's Magazine* are permanently satisfactory. Perhaps none of the volumes are more erudite than those which the late Algar Thorold saw through the press. His recent death, bringing to an end a long and ardent quest for the truth enshrined in mystical philosophy and speculation, leaves England without an adequate Catholic successor to the Baron Von Hügel. To the present editor, Mr. Denis Gwynn, we extend the most sincere of fraternal good wishes.

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WHOM TO TAX AND WHY

By H. BANTA MURKLAND

THE PROVERBIAL fact that nothing is sure but death and taxes should not be interpreted to mean that these two ancient institutions are not subject to the alterations which come in all human affairs. In a time like the present, when every aspect of our national life is subject to change without notice, it is hardly surprising that we should find ourselves compelled to reconsider our concepts of the means and ends of taxation. It is this necessity which makes the current debate on taxation much more important than specific taxes which may be under consideration.

Most contemporary controversies over taxation even when they take the forms of debates over such practical matters as the economic effects of the taxes, the yield which may be expected from them, etc., are essentially battles between two opposing philosophies of taxation. The issue is likely to be chiefly one of emphasis. All taxes have two definite effects. They put money into the public treasury, and in some degree, however slight, they bring about a redistribution of wealth by taking money away from those who pay the taxes and spending it in ways which are not directly or exclusively of benefit to them. The conflict rages between those who believe that the object of taxation should be primarily to raise revenue, with the social effects minimized as much as possible, and those who wish to use taxes chiefly as an instrument for accomplishing social ends, with the revenue aspect less emphasized, although it must always, of course, play an important part. Going still further below the surface, there is an even more fundamental conflict between those who favor the objects which can be attained by using taxation for social ends, and those who oppose such objects.

It was not until capitalism had replaced the old order with a new and far more complex one, that men began to see the economic as well as the moral necessity for systematizing the old hit-and-miss methods of taxation. It became necessary to consider not only the amount of revenue to be raised but the manner of raising it, for its possible effects on the nation's economic life became both more numerous and more important.

This compulsion to change the antiquated methods of the past started flowing that ceaseless stream of tax theory which has continued ever since. The idea of taxation for other purposes than revenue, although it has flowered fully only in recent years, has been in a sense hidden in that stream from the beginning. The first and most important issue to be raised when taxation became an economic problem was that of who were to be taxed. The very raising of that question was in a way the birth of the idea of taxation for social ends, for the fact of discrimination, however rough and inequitable and for whatever reasons meant that to a small and, in a practical sense unimportant, extent the wealth of the nation was being redistributed.

Needless to say, the early theorists never dreamed of the full implications of their dicta on who should and who should not be taxed. Such discrimination as they proposed was purely for the purpose of getting as high a yield with as little trouble and expense as possible.

It was not until the latter part of the nineteenth century that the idea of using taxation for social purposes really took hold. By this time the study of the subject had made it quite plain that taxation did have a definite effect on the economic order as a whole. At the same time scientific Socialism was being formulated and the ranks of those who opposed the capitalist system were forming. It was inevitable that some economic theorists should begin to consider the possibilities of making conscious use of what had hitherto been merely an automatic by-product.

However, while radical thinkers favor the idea and are more or less responsible for its development, it is not essentially a socialistic theory. The transformation envisaged by Socialists goes far beyond the possibilities of taxation. They would make full use of it to achieve and maintain their objectives, but it would never be more than incidental to them. It belongs much more fundamentally to those who wish not to overthrow capitalism but to reform it. Since the New Deal is avowedly such an attempt it is not surprising that the Roosevelt administration has adopted the idea of using taxation as a social instrument, a kind of compromise between the methods of rugged individualism and those of Socialism, a means of changing our social order without destroying it.

Both the friends and enemies of this policy are well supplied with controversial ammunition. Partizans of taxation for social ends maintain that our conventional system of taxation is not a fair one; that taxes tend to fall more and more on those least able to pay them; that the new taxes would strengthen our economy by rendering it less top-heavy; and that by using taxes to help redistribute wealth we would only be giving conscious direction to a development which is going on automatically in any case. In short, that they are simply correcting evils in the present set-up.

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Their opponents charge that they are attempting not to reform but to destroy large-scale industry; that the economic burden of the new taxes would be far greater than any good they might accomplish; and that the technical problems of using taxation in this way are so great that it is impossible to employ them for any definitely and completely forseeable purpose. In short, that the taxes would lead to economic confusion worse confounded.

It is only necessary to suggest a few of the questions which the student of taxation must answer to realize how impossible it is to use facts about taxation in a really scientific manner.

The most important question of all, that of who are to pay taxes, and how much they are to pay, has never been satisfactorily answered. Adam Smith's idea is still as good as any, that "the subjects of every state ought to contribute toward the support of the government, as nearly as possible, in proportion to their respective abilities." But if there have been few to question this general theory, its practical application has been and still is the cause of endless controversy. In the actual laying of taxes, what is to be understood by the expression "in proportion to their respective abilities"? Obviously it does not mean equal amounts from all. Less obviously, but with equal certainty, it does not mean equal proportions from all, for any given percentage of a meager income is more important to its recipient than the same proportion of a rich man's wealth.

The search for a solution of this thorny problem of ability to pay led eventually to the formulation of the concept of progressive taxation, of graduated rates such as are most obviously presented in the modern income tax, where the lower the income, the smaller the proportion of it which must be paid in taxes. But even the progressive tax is of course merely a rough approximation of justice, for there is no absolute way of determining respective burdens on large and small incomes.

But this problem, fundamental though it is, is only one of many, some of them inherent in the very idea of taxation, others due to the constantly increasing complexities of modern society. There is, for example, the question of the kind of taxes. Should they be direct or indirect, and which taxes are one or the other? Should incomes be taxed directly, and if so should any distinction be made between different kinds of income? What of productive industry as a source of taxes; and if it is used, on what basis should the taxes be applied: profits in general, profits over a certain amount, the size of the industry, its public usefulness?

Then there is the matter of the incidence of taxation, which means simply the person who ultimately pays the tax. Some taxes fall directly on the payer. Others can be shifted by the primary payer to someone else, as in the case of certain taxes on business transactions which the business man can pass on in the form of higher prices to his customers or sometimes in lower prices to those from whom he buys raw materials or unfinished goods. The AAA's processing taxes were a good example of shifting. They were paid in the first place by the processor, but in most instances he shifted them to those who bought from him. Although millions of words have been written on the subject of shifting and incidence of taxation alone, it is so complex that it is still far from exhausted, but obviously it is of the first importance in considering specific taxes to know who will actually pay them.

And this in turn leads to the question of the effects of taxation, another one of the most important and at the same time most difficult aspects of the subject.

The success or failure of a business enterprise may be conditioned by the burden of taxation. No capitalist enterprise can survive unless it makes a profit, and the margin of profit may be so small in a modern large-scale industry that it can be completely wiped out by taxation. Also there is the matter of diminishing returns. A tax may be so heavy as to defeat its own object either by encouraging evasions or in extreme cases by making a business unprofitable and hence killing the very goose that laid the golden eggs. In the case of one enterprise this may not be serious except to the entrepreneurs directly concerned, but multiplied many times the whole economic structure might be affected by the methods of taxation used. The drawing of the delicate line on one side of which taxes offer their highest possible yield, while on the other side the yield begins to diminish, is one of the most difficult of fiscal operations.

Such are some of the complexities of taxation in the modern world. As Robert Murray Haig has written: "If the amount of verifiable knowledge concerning the shifting and incidence of taxation is disappointingly slight, the knowledge relating to the more remote influences and effects is even more negligible. Yet the debate regarding specific tax measures is necessarily carried on in terms of what are alleged to be influences and effects."

Under the superficial confusion of the present debate the essential division is between those who do not want the changes which might be brought about by taxation and those who do. This is almost as true in the case of the tax on undivided surpluses as it was more obviously when the administration was engaged in its campaign to "soak the rich." Although for a variety of reasons less is being said now about this aspect of the subject, the surplus tax symbolizes a new philosophy of taxation which once adopted in theory could in practise be put to much wider uses. The realization of this fact underlies the arguments of both attackers and defenders.

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HITLER'S HEATHENS

By RALPH THURSTON

Much is said concerning the new "Heathenism," foster-child of the Nazi government. In the following article a foreign newspaperman collates material recently published with sample addresses by prominent leaders. He quotes the most striking passages of the new "Creed" issued by Dr. Loewe. It is, of course, doubtful that this substitute for religion will become dominant in Germany. But the membership is growing and the leaders are also in many instances the present directors of Germanic destiny.—The Editors.

PUBLICATION by the "German Heathens" of a definite "Creed" again sharply focuses the limelight on one of the most remarkable sideshows of Hitlerism. This sect, fast approaching 1,000,000 followers and numbering most leading Nazis in its ranks, bids fair to sweep the Third Reich. The new pagan Creed is formulated in twenty-five points, in imitation of the original Twenty-five Point Program of the Nazi party. Issuing from the pen of Dr. Busso Loewe, second leader of the Pagan Movement, the Creed's most striking verses read as follows:

"The word 'heathen' is for us no insult but a title of honor. We are proud of our German faith, of our Nordic heathenism."

"If we turn from Jews in politics and business, in art and science and law, then we can no longer allow our religious faith to be dominated by Jews. We believe no more in the Holy Spirit; we believe in the Holy Blood."

"Jews and half-Jews hold no church office whatever. Today neither Saint Paul nor Jesus Himself could be a pastor in the church—nor even a sexton."

"The essence of Jewish-Christianity is: Sin and Absolution. The essence of Nordic Paganism is: Blood and Honor. Everlasting consciousness of sin is a symptom of racial cross-breeding and degeneration. Worried consciousness of sin is at the opposite pole from proud consciousness of race, and the two can never meet."

"Life brings three great things: battle, labor and love. All are by nature holy. We love battle. If battle should at length die out of the world, then all joy would die out of life."

"For the Christian theologians, woman is the 'vessel of sin'; for them the natural urge to love is a sinful desire. In Germany the Catholic and likewise the Protestant church tortured and burned hundreds of thousands of innocent women and girls as witches until in the eighteenth century German science rose and throttled this madness. German youth today finds the moral basis of life not in the Bible but in their new knowledge of racial inheritance and in their faith in Germany."

"We shall not do away with 'Christian' holidays but turn them back into the pagan festivals which were their origin. Easter, for instance, is a thoroughly heathen-Germanic festival that has nothing whatever to do with Christianity. The 'Descent of the Holy Spirit' brings us only embarrassment; for who thinks on Simon, Peter and their brethren when the meadowlark sings, the cuckoo calls and the apple-trees are bright with blossoms?"

"To celebrate these festivals we need no priestly caste. The father of the family or a friend, the Storm Troop leader or the Black Shirts officer can hold these celebrations more beautifully and naturally than any paid agent of an alien religion."

"Christian confirmation is only a recent institution. In the close-knit political, social and religious brotherhood of the German future, Christian confirmation will be replaced by the great Third Reich annual festival celebrating the entrance of the Hitler Youths into the ranks of the Storm Troops."

"The German people need no Bible. The Edda and the Sagas, Master Ekkehart and Frederick the Great, Goethe and Schiller, Hoelderlin and Nietzsche and many other great Germans were no Christians; they believed in life, in Nature and in the power of the German soul."

The German Heathens are formally organized as a religious body, having elected Dr. Wilhelm Hauer, theological professor of Tuebingen University, to its presidency at the first National Diet held in Erlangen in July, 1934. Chief-Heathen Hauer amplified this Creed in punching home its principles before his last mass-meeting in Munich. Speaking before a cheering crowd of 10,000 in the Circus Building there he said, "Christianity is a mere episode in 5,000 years of heroic Teutonic history." "We want no Holy Scripture save the History of Germany," he stated calmly, "and we recognize no Holy Land save that of Germany."

Many of the most famous Nazi leaders have become fanatic converts to the movement. Walther Darré, Hitler's young Minister of Agriculture, has gone so far in his zeal as to issue an "Official Farmer's Calendar" which actually proselytizes for Heathenism under the egis of the Third Reich government. The calendar, delivered to every farmer in Germany, omits all saint's days from its pages (it is the first German

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calendar to do so for 135 years). Instead, the traditional German holidays are "explained on a basis of German history."

Easter, for instance, is not Easter, but "feast of the Sunrise." Assumption Day has become "Thor's Descent after the Hammer," and Ash Wednesday is "Ash-Wotan's Day." December 25 brings the "Coming of the Yule Child and the Appearance of the Goat-Star on Valhalla's Roof."

Good Friday, however, wins the propaganda prize. It is described as "in memory of the 4,500 Saxons murdered by Charlemagne the Butcher and of the 9,000,000 others murdered, tortured and burnt to death for being champions of the right, believing men, as heretics or witches."

Nor are these calendar alterations to "pure pagan festivals" mere tribal romanticizing. Nazi organizations, and many of the foremost Nazi chiefs, have turned them into a striking reality. On the night which all Christian Germans were still celebrating as Christmas Eve, the thousand highest officers of Hitler's famous Black Shirts climbed through the snow up the famous Brocken Mountain, classic site of the "Witches' Sabbaths" in German legend and pagan literature. Here they were led in rites celebrating "the Winter Turn of the Sun" by Heinrich Himmler, supreme commander of the Black Shirts and head of the Third Reich's secret police, most feared man in Hitler Germany. The laconic official account of this strange ceremony follows: "In the midst of a howling icy storm and after earnest words, Leader Himmler lighted the huge pile of wood upon the summit, which blazed wild and bright in the dark and stormy night. Black Shirts held the fire-watch beside the Solstice-Sacrificial Flame, and Hitler Youths spelled them off in guarding the flame of purity and eternity."

Julius Streicher, greatest Nazi radical and the world's Jew-baiter-in-chief, has also found time to organize huge heathen rituals. His pagan prayer-meetings are held each year on the summit of the Hesselberg, highest mountain in his province, on the longest day of the year. Streicher has twice led 100,000 Bavarians in a pilgrimage there, to participate in a "strictly Teutonic" religious program of "the old Germanic fire-dance, the prayer to the sun, and sword swinging." Last July 21, Streicher told this gathering of the Teutonic faithful: "Two thousand years ago, the Fighter of Nazareth first spoke his great words. Fifteen years ago a man arose in Germany—no Jesus Christ, but one who followed in His footsteps and carried on His Fight."

Alfred Rosenberg, last year appointed by Hitler to be "Sole Overseer of Philosophy and Education in Nazi Germany," goes even one step further. "Christ was obviously a Nordic," he teaches, ". . . surely a member of that Aryan tribe which swept down into India and Asia and gave civilization its rise there. If Christ were a mere Jew, the heroic elements in His character which attract us Germans would be totally missing."

Similarly, Adolf Wagner, absolute Nazi boss of Bavaria and one of the outstanding radical leaders of Germany, spoke only the honest sentiment of the majority of Nazis when he addressed a recent women's mass-meeting in Munich as follows: "Many call us heathens. All right! Adolf Hitler's books and speeches are our Sermon on the Mount. We judge a man not by whether he ever goes inside a church or not, but by whether he is a Nazi. We Nazis are God-fearing and God-believing; whoever believes in his people believes in God. If this, our Germanism, be called heathenism by our enemies, that is not our fault."

But the rise of the Heathen movement has brought forth phrasing far more fiery. In South Germany it has liberated a near-carnival of anti-Catholicism. At the first mass-meeting of the German Heathens this year, for instance, beer-tables filled with black-uniformed Storm Troopers rendered thunderously a "Heathen hymn." It recounted how "Popes sitting on a silken throne burnt our ancestors as heretics and continually robbed our lands, all to foist a Jewish religion upon us"; and described how today "at last blood and sword and swastika will set everything right."

The Bavarian Heathen leader, Dr. Wilhelm Backofen, roused tremendous cheers with the statement: "The mealy-mouthed ritual of Catholic orders is for us a more effective emetic than any purchasable at drug stores."

Now that the German Heathens have achieved a printed Creed, they may definitely be considered to have come of age. They already have most of Hitler Germany's officialdom within their ranks, and German Heathenism threatens equally both the established faiths. For more than a year the Catholic and Protestant churches of Germany have buried the hatchet of century-old rivalry and stood shoulder to shoulder to stop the all-conquering advance of the Heathens. For both desperately recognize that, whether they succeed in slowing down the mad rush of the new movement or not, its last goal will remain the same—to substitute for the familiar cross of Christ the "Teutonic" swastika of Hitler.

Saint Thomas Aquinas

You said the lodestar of the mind,
Fired with energy from above,
Seeking the Triune-God, will find
Him centered in the core of love.

Yes, as of old the olives bloom
In blest Ovieto this fair Spring;
But you, in love's celestial room,
Forever banquet with your King.

J. Corson Miller.

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SUMMA MYSTICA

By KURT F. REINHARDT

E. I. WATKIN, in his preface to "A Philosophy of Form" (Sheed and Ward, 1935), applies to the finished product of his creative mind the term "eclecticism." He modestly disclaims any attempt on his part at constructing a metaphysical system but declares himself satisfied with contributing a building stone to the edifice of the *philosophia perennis*. He is convinced that Thomas Aquinas leaned too heavily to the Aristotelian aspect of the Platonic-Aristotelian tradition and he follows Bonaventure in advancing a Platonically inspired theory of human knowledge. If this were all that Mr. Watkin has to offer, the term eclecticism would indeed be justified. But Watkin's work is in fact much more than an historical synthesis. It represents a comprehensive and in many respects novel view and interpretation of reality, a real "Summa" in the time-honored sense of the term, but neither "Theologica" nor purely "Philosophica," rather a "Summa Mystica." If by "mysticism" we understand the theory and practise of acquired and infused contemplation, then Watkin's philosophy of the contemplation of "Form" is one of the rare classical manifestations of a strictly and sublimely Christian mysticism.

The work is organized in accordance with the established principles of the *philosophia perennis,* laying out the metaphysical ground-plan in the first part and erecting upon it the structure of ethics and esthetics. In this way the practical implications and consequences of metaphysical principles are impressively demonstrated. The chapters dealing with sociology contain in irrefutable language a most pertinent critical review of current social and political philosophies and pseudo-religious ideologies. In his discussion of esthetical problems Watkin analyzes contemporary trends and movements in art and literature and proves a trustworthy guide in questions pertaining to the appreciation and criticism of art. Crowning the magnificent edifice of his mystical dome with a phenomenological description of the highest stages of mystical contemplation and the *unio mystica,* Watkin strains to the utmost his extraordinary mastery of style and diction so as to make it yield the bare outline of the undefinable hues and tints of religious experience.

It is sound scholasticism when Watkin says that the nature of things is constituted by their form. If we then contemplate the nature of things, we contemplate primarily their form. And this is how a philosophy of contemplation issues in "A Philosophy of Form." Now modern philosophy since Descartes and more especially since Kant has refused to accept this universe of forms as a given reality. It started with methodical scepticism and arrived at systematic agnosticism. The only reality that was left after Kant was a mental reality, "the logical process of cosmic thought" (Hegel). The natural sciences, on the other hand, had to deal with that very same reality whose existence was denied by the metaphysicians. And so the ways of metaphysical knowledge and scientific knowledge parted. Comte went so far as to substitute science for metaphysics. Materialism accepted this scientific quantitative universe as the real and whole universe, and mentality was declared its by-product or "superstructure" (Karl Marx).

Because a sound metaphysical foundation is lacking, a philosophy of actualism and factualism exalts action and research at the expense of knowledge and wisdom. Concrete experience is idolized at the expense of thought and contemplation. Might is placed above law, the violence of arbitrary will above reason. This philosophy of "energeticism," as Watkin calls it, has resulted from the subordination of form to force, and it goes hand in hand with the arbitrary rule of the dictator.

Carrel, the scientist, and Watkin, the philosopher, agree in their demand to seek escape from our metaphysical impasse in the frank acceptance of man's entire experience in its self-evidence. Contemplating the hierarchy of forms which determine the experience of external reality, the human mind apprehends an order of immutable truth and value which, in turn, can be made the order of individual and social action. Contemplation, then, will act as a force of integration in regard to human knowledge and human action.

With Aristotle and the Thomists Watkin defines man as a rational or a contemplative animal, but with Plotinus and Bonaventure and over the objections of Thomas Aquinas, he postulates a spiritual matter in the human soul. He sees the distinction between corporeal being (matter) and spiritual being as one of degree only, as "a difference in the self-concentration of energy and a corresponding difference in its reality—a minus and plus in the scale of created energy . . ." (page 31). "Spiritual matter" signifies the potency of pure spirits, and the concept as such serves to substantiate the nature of the soul as a subsistent and immortal entity. Watkin also follows Bonaventure rather than Aristotle and Thomas when

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he maintains the possibility of indefinite multiplication of individual forms (the "Socratesness of Socrates"). He claims that the denial of subspecific forms has led the Aristotelians to assert a fixity and peculiar determination of the species, which the natural sciences can hardly admit.

If man is essentially a contemplative animal, then contemplation should determine and integrate his acts. To insist on this ancient classical and Christian principle of the prevalence of contemplation over action must come as a shock to most of our contemporaries. And yet, to reassert this ancient truth means nothing more and nothing less than to state unequivocally that man's life should be based on knowledge of the truth about the world and about himself. And this knowledge is achieved by contemplation.

If man is a rational animal, his action should bear witness to his rationality.

> Since reason belongs to a sphere above vital life it must not be rejected for instinct. A plant cannot live and grow without light. Man cannot live and unfold his life without the illumination of reason, the light of contemplation [page 122].

Is it not true, however, that the voluntarism of Bergson and Nietzsche, the irrationalism of Spengler and Klages, the crude naturalism of Freud, the primitive mythologies of Ludendorff, Bergmann and Rosenberg, represents an antithetical reaction against the aridity of an extreme rationalism which deifies reason to the detriment of intuition and instinct? Again contemplation appears as the great redeeming force, releasing man from the bondage to the purely biological sphere. In all spheres, even in the most practical and utilitarian, contemplation points the way to solution and salvation.

From that deliberate exercise of intuition which finds its fruition in the apprehension of form, and which in its higher realizations coalesces with the metabiological union of religious love or charity, Watkin derives the principles of Christian sociology. In a rational system of distribution and economic organization every man will be enabled to practise the manner of contemplation for which he possesses the attraction and aptitude. In his scrutinizing analysis of the sociological formations of Liberalism, Communism and Fascism, Watkin digs deeply to bare their metaphysical roots. By doing so, he arrives at a clearer and truer comprehension of these complex phenomena than most authors who have dealt with the same subject and objective. Disorganized or dehumanized social and political formations proceed from a deordinated metaphysics and a perverted scale of values. In Liberal Individualism an organic social form is conspicuously lacking. Philosophically speaking, it is based on a nominalistic conception for which only the individual and the particular represents a reality whereas the common and universal form which binds individual to individual is considered a fiction. The liberalistic society is anticipated in the "social contract" theory of Hobbes and Rousseau. It is erected upon an atomistic metaphysics and sociology. Individual rights completely outweigh social claims.

In its very imperfection, however, this society of rugged individualists still echoes the Christian conviction of the infinite worth of the individual soul. And so the liberal insistence on freedom of thought and conscience appears justified against its denial by the Communist and Fascist states. In Christianity only is found the necessary complement of such an exaggerated individualism: the organism of the Mystical Body of Christ provides a model synthesis of individual and social aspirations and forces. There can be no truly Christian society without the element of freedom:

> God so prized man's free service that He preferred a humanity sinful but free to a humanity of compulsory righteousness. . . . Better, if needs must, be ruined by the free disorganization of the Liberal state than saved by the servile organs of a Nazi or Communist state. What should a man receive in exchange for the human dignity of a free soul? [page 178 sq.].

These words, spoken in the face of Christianity, are of truly monumental weight. They nullify once and for all the claims of any totalitarian state that dares to set itself up as an idol, demanding the worship of man's body and soul.

Watkin sees Fascism and Communism as two aspects of the same thing. Both are pseudo-religions, deifying the State, society, the party or the leader. Both may in fact be traced back to an adaptation of Hegelian dialectics to political and economic needs and wants. In Germany this Hegelian influence was an immediate one whose different stages may be easily distinguished. Hegelianism was imported into Russia by way of Karl Marx. With the recent Russian acceptance of a modified and more moderate form of materialism, in the shape of a philosophy of dynamic will and vital energy, the Communist ideology approaches even more closely the activistic "wind and will philosophy" of Fascism, with its incumbent idolization of vital force. Both societies are "dark and satanic," divorcing will from truth, deifying human will in its self-sufficiency and pride. And if the question should (as undoubtedly it will) be asked, whether the governments of Italy, Germany and Russia cannot point to very substantial accomplishments that speak in their favor, Watkin would give the lapidary answer:

> Incidental good cannot atone for a principle radically false and evil [page 203]. There is no room for two Gods. . . . If the human State is God, the supreme value and last end of human society and the cosmic process, God is at least implicitly denied. If God is the supreme value and last end of human

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history and the cosmic process, the State is His servant and the servant of His servants. The choice is before us, as the Carmel choice between Baal and God was before Israel of old [page 204].

It seems to this writer that Watkin's real message for our time is contained in his sociology. His esthetics is essentially impregnable, refuting subjectivism, emotionalism and dilettantism in artistic and literary criticism and appreciation and building up a solid structure of esthetic values. But others have interpreted classical and scholastic esthetics for us, others have adapted and adjusted the lasting principles of esthetic judgment to the changing aspects of temporal conditions and circumstances. Others, too, have made profound inquiry into the problems of mystical theology and have thus contributed to the philosophy and phenomenology of religious and mystical experience. Christian mystics and writers on mysticism of the past and present will recognize Watkin as their peer. But in his sociology our author is truly original. He faces courageously the spiritual crisis of our own day. Like Kant but more adequately equipped for his task than the great scrutinizer of theoretical and practical reason, Watkin considers it all-important for man to learn what it means to be a member of the species humana, and then to act in accordance with this knowledge.

THE GLUTTON

By PAUL BUSSARD

IT WAS that time between night and day when all but the worst were in bed and the good had not yet begun to rise. One who just happens to be up then cannot help but see how tranquillity comes out of the night vestured with woven stars and with the sleep of eternity in her eyes. At sight of her Chronos cowers. Those who are either good or bad feel that time has for the moment become forgetful of passage, for the night is gone and day has not yet come, and even the earth must pause for a breath before she can sustain the rush of trampling feet for another day. Pierrot, walking with Columbine and one on his way to sleep, wondered if they, too, felt that one might, by standing on tiptoe, touch one's finger to the sky which yesterday had seemed so far and high.

"It isn't necessary to talk," he said to the man, "because I know you are going to continue that hopeless discussion. What if you did think of another argument? Does it matter?"

"Yes," said the other. "You have said it is important. And I have said I cannot act on an uncertainty."

"Excuse me," said Pierrot distantly, "you have said it is important. And I have said you must act on an uncertainty."

"Go on from there," murmured Columbine, "you have been plowing that field all night."

Pierrot was watching the eastern stars grow reluctantly dim in the coming light, as he listened to the man speak to Columbine. "To some," he was saying, "it is only a manner of exercise, and once the thing is gone over they walk away. Their interest is only in the making of argument. But to me this world maze of uncertainty and guess is terribly serious. On one hand there is the amazing harvest to be gained by the simple act of faith, if what you two have told me is true. On the other hand there is but vanity, sterility and ugly effort if what you say is wrong. If I could but have certainty. But then," he went on without looking at the East, "I suppose I shall always be going back and forth between the two and end the wretched business by dying exactly in the middle."

"You would like to have the proof of it between the fingers of your left hand so you could pry into it with an instrument," said Pierrot without taking his eyes off the last of the stars.

After a while Pierrot said evenly, "You are a glutton."

"Indeed."

"I say to you now," Pierrot said rather aimlessly, "there have been stars in the East. But you have not seen them with all this tragedy of staring upon the ground. And I cannot prove to you that even one has been there for you would say, 'Put it into my hand so I can look at it.' You have been walking in the brilliance of enough glory, these few minutes past, to make a million mouths voluble with wonderment. But all you can think of is more without having seen what there is."

Columbine's hair became alive as the sun, flinging his brilliant mantle, strode through the gates of day.

"You would say to the star of which I spoke," Pierrot said, half repressing a yawn, "that it should at least come down so that you could stand upon it."

"But aren't we all standing upon one at the moment?" said Columbine, startled a little at what she had said so quickly.

"And standing upon the star," continued Pierrot, "you would then allow yourself to be persuaded, after great intellectual labor, to admit that after all things had been gone over and investigations conducted from every angle, and sufficient footnotes filled with learning had been made to the report of the inquiry, that you stood upon a star."

"You infer," said the man, "that it might be more reasonable to lift one's eyes to the stars, since they were evidently made for some such purpose, than to try to lure a star under one's feet."

"And follow it." Pierrot was speaking to Columbine. "His ambition is to reduce the absolute to the status of a leg of mutton. He will sink his teeth into it. Then when the juices run down his jaws, he will go so far as to admit it is a leg of mutton. The fault lies not with the stars, nor with the mutton, nor with the absolute. Shall we beseech him with great vehemence to raise his eyes and see the mystery through which he walks?"

Pierrot's voice grew small. As he walked arm in arm with Columbine he could be seen gesturing slightly with his free hand and Columbine nodding hasty yeses. Watching them walk toward the horizon the man pulled his hat down over his eyes to shield them from the sun.

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Seven Days' Survey

The Church.—At the sixth national conference of the Laymen's Retreat Movement, which opened in Chicago, June 27, the Very Reverend James Gilsenan of Silver Creek, New York, outlined a program recommending the appointment of a retreat chairman in every parish, the formation of retreat classes, systematic publicity in the Catholic press and insistence on closed retreats. * * * The Most Reverend Andrew McDonald, O.S.B., Archbishop of St. Andrews and Edinburgh, led a pilgrimage of 900 to the Island of Iona, cradle of Christianity in Scotland, to honor Saint Columba who died there 1,339 years ago. High Mass was sung in a field beside the ancient Iona cathedral which was rebuilt in the twelfth century and is now in Protestant hands. * * * More than 23,000 sick and invalid Catholics throughout the nation observed Mission Sunday of the Sick on Pentecost Sunday under the auspices of the Society for the Propagation of the Faith. * * * The training and preparation of catechists and other religious teachers is the chief problem facing the Church in the Philippines where the law of the Commonwealth provides for religious instruction in public schools three days a week for those pupils whose parents or guardians desire it. * * * Reverend John O'Connor of Bradford, England, original of the Father Brown detective stories, celebrated a memorial Mass at Westminster Cathedral, London, for the late G. K. Chesterton; Archbishop Hinsley of Westminster gave the absolution after Mass, and a message from the Holy Father was read which paid tribute to Mr. Chesterton as a devoted son of the Church and defender of the Faith. * * * Auxiliary Bishop Bernard J. Sheil of Chicago reports that last year the Catholic Youth Organization rendered medical and dental service to 50,000 boys, gave lodging to over 3,000 transients, conducted 13 occupational schools, gave 700 scholarships, clothed 3,000 boys and served 3,000,000 meals. The organization's second annual Eucharistic celebration, held in the stadium of Notre Dame University, June 21, was attended by 20,000.

The Nation.—The American Iron and Steel Institute, representing the $5,000,000,000 core of American industry, took cognizance of the prominently publicized drive by union leaders to unionize their mills and issued an unprecedented statement declaring steel's intention of keeping the open shop, protecting company unions and preserving "advancement by individual merit." "The steel industry will use its resources to the best of its ability to protect its employees and their families from intimidation, coercion and violence and to aid them in maintaining collective bargaining free from interference from any source." * * * White House conferences were called to organize a defense against a new drought which has brought distress to an estimated 150,000 families. For sections of the Dakotas, Montana, Wyoming, Oklahoma, Arkansas, Tennessee and Kentucky almost complete crop failure has been predicted. * * * Secretary of Agriculture Wallace appears to have embraced completely the cooperative idea of preserving democracy against Communist and Fascist dictatorship. Writing for *Scribner's* he declares: "The cooperative way of life must pervade the community and this means there must be consumers cooperatives as well as producers cooperatives, and ultimately industrial cooperatives." * * * The District of Columbia Supreme Court declared unconstitutional the 1935 Railroad Pension Law and the tax measure designed to finance it. The decision, important in itself, also throws doubt on the legality of the whole Social Security Act with its system of payroll taxes. * * * Over 16,500 farmers are voluntarily active in demonstration soil conservation projects throughout the country. With no payments from the government, they are using their land and giving their services as the Soil Conservation Service recommends. More than 23,000 other farmers have asked to cooperate in similar programs. * * * In mid-Nebraska archeologists made discoveries that indicate a large city existed there 4,000 years ago, centuries before Tut-ankh-Amen. Below this they found stone implements they have not yet dated. Theories of Indian culture will have to be revised. * * * The fifteen-year term of the first Controller General of the United States, John R. McCarl, ended July 1. The office is independent of the executive and the final authority in settling federal claims, debts and accounts. Mr. McCarl, a strong Republican, indicated he would enter active politics.

The Wide World.—Considerable interest attaches to the League of Nations sessions beginning this week, not merely because the problem of sanctions imposed against Italy will be solved but because a new orientation of foreign policy is likely in several states. The failure to bring about an effective League stand in behalf of Ethiopia has made so deep an impression on Great Britain that, in all probability, no further serious effort to "police the world" will be undertaken. Mr. Baldwin has declared that the British frontier is the Rhine; Mr. Duff-Cooper reiterated this point of view—which seems to balk contradiction—in Paris; and Sir Samuel Hoare averred that the chief task confronting his countrymen is refurbishment of the navy. Emperor Haile Selassie stirred little quixotic enthusiasm in London, though in all probability the League will not at present recognize Italian claims to Ethiopia. Observers maintained that the British were no longer interested in Danubian and East European affairs, despite the evidence that recent parleys between English and Russian statements were genuinely significant. * * * French unrest continued to be reflected in gold shipments, which create a serious monetary problem in the United States. The Blum Cabinet had to deal with important marine strikes which for a time halted a great portion of the traffic between France, Corsica and

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Africa. Other strikes and disturbances kept the nation in a state of alarm. Meanwhile the political outlook was cloudier than ever. The government proceeded with plans to nationalize the Banque de France and the munitions industries. But a ban on Right-wing (Fascist) organizations was defied, and in all parts of the country there were clashes between political extremists. The greatest source of trouble is the antagonism created by the Communist red flag in the minds of those who reverence the tricolor. Even children are wearing the emblems favored by their families. It appeared probable that the Popular Front would collapse unless Premier Blum could somehow prevent a threatened serious cleavage between the Radical Socialists and the Communists. Meanwhile there was considerable improvement in the foreign outlook. Removal of sanctions and a better understanding with Great Britain seemed assured. * * * Some clashes between Nanking and the Cantonese troops were reported from Hunan province, China, but the prevailing Nankingese view was that no "real trouble" had occurred and that difficulties would be settled amicably. * * * The Spanish Cabinet voted a credit of 1,000,000 pesetas to finance a program calling for the eventual abolition of all education by members of religious orders. It was, however, considered wholly impossible that 1,000,000 pesetas would do more than scratch the surface.

* * * *

NEA versus Oath Laws.—The National Education Association opened its seventy-fourth annual convention in Portland on June 29. Over 10,000 teachers of all degrees assembled for the debates, speeches and resolutions. The most prominent issue by far was the "teachers' oath laws," making teachers promise not to teach anything but the most patriotic doctrines, which have been passed by more than twenty state legislatures. The District of Columbia law forbidding payment of salary to anyone "teaching or advocating Communism" was particularly attacked. In some places students are also forced to pledge allegiance to the flag. Almost unanimously the teachers consider this type of law a Fascist threat to freedom of speech and freedom of conscience. The legislative committee of the convention endorsed the Harrison-Fletcher bill to appropriate federal funds to aid state public schools, $100,000,000 the first year and eventually $300,000,000 a year. Speakers praised present college students as the first generation actively fighting the greatest social evil, war. They called for a new type of high school which would educate youths between eighteen and twenty-one years of age who are not now needed in business. They advocated a broad program of adult civic education as a necessity for democracy, and heartily condemned mob violence and suppression by legislative action. Party politics was to be soft-pedaled. On the final day only, representatives of the Democratic, Republican and Socialist parties were to speak. An important internal contest was being waged by the rank and file of classroom teachers who want greater power in the conduct of the association. The charter of the NEA is fixed by the United States Congress, so that it is difficult to change, but affairs can be conducted through by-laws, and it is through them that the rank and file seek greater control. Changes, however, might threaten the large permanent fund of the association, now controlled by continuing trustees who hold office for long periods of time.

German Catholic Situation.—Despite the proximity of the Berlin Olympics, relations between Nazism and the Church are, perhaps, more strained than ever before. To a certain extent the pressure now being brought to bear on the clergy is the result of slackening Protestant resistance to the State. But doubtless another cause is the quiet sabotage by Catholics of ideological displays fomented by Dr. Goebbels. The "morality trials" have, however, evoked considerable resistance. From official Nazi sources have come several explanatory statements all so much of one piece that Minister Frick's address declaring that the "trials" were only an effort to purge useful organizations of harmful members. He likened them, as a matter of fact, to the "Roehm purge." Outside Catholic circles (and indeed in some instances inside Nazi ranks) much criticism has been brought, especially by women, of the reigning tendency to flaunt sex crimes and abnormality. Apart from these matters, the principal developments have been: restriction of Catholic Social Welfare collections, with the result that the funds made available to caritative organizations will doubtless be greatly curtailed; limitation and in many cases prohibition of the traditional Corpus Christi processions; the issuance of a rule that Catholic theological students, exempt under the Concordat from military service, must serve the *Landjahr* (year spent in government rural labor organizations, which provide a supplement to military service); the destruction of crucifixes in the Archdiocese of Freiburg; and the award of the Goethe Medal of the city of Düsseldorf to Professor Heinrich Wolf, a rabid anti-Catholic pamphleteer and a charlatan par excellence. It was predicted that the remaining associations of Catholic workers would probably be disbanded, but that the Church authorities would resist to the last dissolution of the youth organizations. In Prussia Catholic civil servants were ordered not to march in a body in Corpus Christi processions. According to the NCWC correspondent, fines totaling $5,000,000 have so far been levied against Catholic clergy and religious found guilty of violating foreign exchange laws.

Non-Catholic Religious Activities.—Dr. Toyohiko Kagawa of Japan delivered a final message to America in a nation-wide broadcast, June 30, before sailing for the World Sunday School Convention at Oslo, which will be attended by 800 American delegates. Dr. Kagawa goes to Europe to study health insurance at the request of the Japanese government. In his travels to different parts of the United States during the past six months on behalf of the cooperative movement Dr. Kagawa visited 150 cities where he spoke to audiences ranging from 2,000 to 15,000. * * * The forty-seventh annual convention of the Central Conference of American Rabbis at Cape May, New Jersey, adopted resolutions favoring stronger neu-

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trality, nationalization of the munitions industry, and the enactment of a constitutional amendment denying government appropriations to schools requiring military training. In expressing "religious objection" to any state which "strikes at the very practise of religion" the convention referred specifically to the "treatment of Catholics in our sister republic of Mexico." * * * Ministers of the Oregon Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church unanimously adopted a resolution opposing military training and making it non-compulsory in the colleges and universities of the state. The Northwest Indiana Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church made a similar request of Indiana and Purdue universities.

American Art.—We had the pleasure in the columns of this magazine to discover some years ago a young painter then practically unknown except to his friends in Philadelphia and a small circle outside his home town. Today, he is the youngest contemporary to have been "acquired" by the Metropolitan. Such acquisition is becoming more and more meaningful. It used to be that a group of respectable elderly gentlemen, in their leisure time, sat around a board-room table at the Metropolitan and played safe by acquiring mature, and expensive, old masters. The critical profession kept up a cricketing of objections that this procedure left living men and women, who were doing excellent and valuable work and making a contribution to life as it is lived, without official recognition in the United States. Various smaller galleries, such as the Whitney and the Modern, sprang up as a popular expression of this desire to help and to show and to make known the work of contemporary artists. At last the Metropolitan, in part due to the admission to the councils of a young student of art, Mr. Greenway, also began to acquire contemporary Americans, as well as some of the near classics of the impressionist school. Alexander Brook's beautiful "Ann," and examples of such mature, but still very much alive, men as Sloane, Speicher, Caroll, Kroll—to mention some names at random—were bought and received the delighted indorsement of the critical profession. The value of the artists' work rose, naturally, and properly. Which is obviously all to the good. If prophecy is granted us, we should venture that one of the youngest American women to be acquired by the Metropolitan, will be Yvonne DuBois, whose show at 608 Fifth Avenue has been a summer landmark.

* * * *

Communist Convention.—The ninth national convention of the Communist party assembled 710 delegates and alternates in New York City. It was the Communists' first public convention, and at the final meeting there were 25,000 people cheering in a traditional fashion and going through half-hour demonstrations and parades. Earl Browder, secretary of the party, was nominated for President, and James W. Ford, Negro Communist, for Vice-President. The party now claims 50,000 dues-paying members, an increase of 66 percent since 1934 and 500 percent more than in 1929. The Young Communist League accounts for 11,000 of these. In New York State the membership is 16,000, up 300 percent since 1934. William Z. Foster, the keynoter, said that the Communist "is now the only party carrying on the old American tradition and which offers the only way out." Mr. Browder described the Republican party, in union with "Hearst-Liberty League-Wall Street" forces as the "chief enemy," which must be defeated "at all costs." He voiced sympathy with labor forces supporting Roosevelt against it, but nevertheless condemned the Democrats for backsliding. He said that the Socialist party, rid of its Right-wing dissidents, has become a "backwater of doctrinaire sectarianism." He spoke strongly in favor of a Farmer-Labor party, and counseled Communists to support local Farmer-Labor organizations. He said he had "full knowledge that the great majority are not yet prepared to turn to Socialism as represented either by the Socialist or Communist party." The platform adopted was therefore reformist: the Frazier-Lundeen Social Security bill; curtailment of the power of the Supreme Court; a sharp income tax on incomes of over $5,000; extension of the WPA; a thirty-four hour week; freeing of farmers from debts, unbearable taxation and foreclosures; increased educational and occupational opportunities for youth; death penalty for lynching; imprisonment of employers for discharging workers for union or political activity; equal rights for Negroes.

Death by Air.—The preliminary report of the Senate Committee on Commerce is an indictment of the administration of the Bureau of Air Commerce that amounts almost to a charge of manslaughter. Thorough overhauling of the bureau with "a view to improving its administrative officials" is urged upon the Secretary of Commerce. Specifically the report alleges that the crash of the commercial air liner in Missouri, in which Senator Bronson Cutting of New Mexico was killed, was caused by three failures of the aids to navigation furnished by the bureau: the Kansas City Radio Range, the MRL radio station at Kirksville and the rotating light beacons southwest of Millard Airport, Missouri. Senators Copeland, Clark and Donahey, who signed the report, said in part: "It is unpleasant for us to be required to reflect in any manner whatever upon individuals. . . . When we approach the question of what to recommend regarding Mr. Vidal, nominally in charge of the Bureau of Air Commerce, we are at a loss. He is an amiable gentleman. He has a good background. Our fear is that he is too amiable, that he is lacking in iron, positiveness and the determination to keep the employees under his direction functioning according to schedule." Of "the professional equipment and preparation" of Mr. Rex Martin, assistant director of the bureau, the report says that "a man of much larger experience is needed. He must be chosen, not with reference to his political affiliations but strictly because of his professional ability, his known success as an administrator, his possession of tact and qualities of leadership." Mr. J. Carroll Cone, the other assistant director, was given a clean bill of health by the terse comment that he came through the inquisition "without criticism."

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The Play and Screen

The Turn of the Road

ADVERSITY is an admirable corrective. The years between the war and the depression saw the American theatre in the hands of the expansionists, moral and esthetic. So expansive were our dramatists that they took in everything and left out nothing—except often good taste and moral integrity. It wasn't so much that they questioned morality and reticence, as that they laughed at them or declared they didn't exist, while the more "thoughtful" playwrights amused themselves by standing morality and reticence on their heads. A decade and a half this orgy lasted, for it didn't end with the end of 1929; it took five years more for the dramatists to realize that the old times were dead, and that they were no longer permitted to be naughty truant children—that is, if they wished to be taken seriously. Eugene O'Neill already had showed the way in his journey from paganism back to Christianity, and despite the jeremiads of the critics at his apostasy, his fellow playwrights have begun to take the hint. Indeed the season of 1935-1936 shows that it is more than a hint. It hasn't been that poor taste, blasphemy and twisted moral ideas completely vanished from the plays of the last ten months; the hot iron of the depression hasn't seared these ulcers utterly from the body of the drama; but during the last season they have seemed rather surface excrescences than deep-seated tumors. Some of the important plays of the year have contained regrettable, even reprehensible, lines and incidents, but almost without exception they have been just lines and incidents, not as they have been so often in former years the reason for the play's existence.

Let me take a few of the season's real successes. "Idiot's Delight," the Pulitzer prize play, is primarily a denunciation of war. That its chief protagonists are not persons of the highest moral principle, that there are some lines which had better have been left out, does not destroy the final moral effect of Mr. Sherwood's drama. Maxwell Anderson's "Winterset" is highly moral in intention, despite the young girl's lack of moral ideas. "Dead End" does have some truly abominable language put into the mouths of the slum children, but the final effect of the play is one of horror that such slum conditions could be allowed to exist. "End of Summer" deals with a sophisticated and partially decadent society, and pictures it in all its moral confusion. It is true Mr. Berman gives no solution to his problem, but he certainly does not approve of its lack of moral fiber, despite the fact that he allows each character, often like a sort of Devil's Advocate, to give his or her philosophy unhobbled by the author's preferences. "Remember the Day" is a truly delightful genre portrait of childhood seen through the mists of memory. "Call It a Day," while at times skirting dangerous corners, is in its total effect healthy in moral tone. "First Lady" is entirely unobjectionable. "Parnell" deals with a difficult subject in a manner worthy of high praise. As for "Pride and Prejudice," "Saint Joan" and "The Taming of the Shrew," all magnificent popular successes, nothing need be said in this connection beyond the mere naming of the plays. These plays with "Boy Meets Girl," a rather vulgar even if amusing farce, were the outstanding hits of the season.

Taking it either from the moral or the esthetic standard this is a pretty good record. Since the war we have been living in a pagan age according to pagan standards, and the dramatists' motto seems to have been too often, "Sufficient unto the day is the pleasure thereof." Often the road in the drama, as elsewhere, seems to have been the road to Avernus. But it is evident that a turning in that road has come, in the theatre as in other things.

GRENVILLE VERNON.

Hearts Divided

THE FLUFFY Marion Davies's performance is all too reminiscent of the histrionics that might be expected from a student of high-school theatricals after her second lesson from a correspondence school of the "drahma." Artlessly and heartlessly, she flattens, even flatters the grand collection of supporting players and Director Frank Borzage's capable construction of an episode based, historically, on the romance of the mischievious Jerome Bonaparte (Dick Powell), young brother of Napoleon, with Elizabeth Patterson (Marion Davies), aristocratic belle of Baltimore.

Despite the aforementioned deficiencies, the play could entertain, in the tempo of light summer musical romance, romping gayly, though fashionably, through the expansive old colonial halls of early America, to the royal baths of Napoleonic ambitions in France. Nor can it be said that the producers did not give their star the finest production mounting, capturing the delightful old colonial spirit of the occasion and the people of the day, and even signing the noted Hall Johnson Negro Choir for a mere atmospheric flash in order to allow Miss Davies to saunter nonchalantly through the cabins of the plantation workers.

Warner Brothers cheerfully took liberties with the historical facts of a century and a quarter ago, when Napoleon sent Jerome to America in the matter of the Louisiana Purchase. Regardless, Jerome's meetings on the screen with Thomas Jefferson, Alexander Hamilton and such other notables of the time give considerable more interest than virtually all of the actions of the two central characters.

Poppy

W. C. FIELDS gives to his character of Professor Eustace McGonigle the same gustful artistry of the happy-go-lucky fumbling carnival grafter as that which made his appearance in the stage version so successful on Broadway some fifteen years ago, abounding now, as then, in typical Fieldsian gag, situation and conversational comedy that is leavened by a thread of youthful romance and serio-drama.

JAMES P. CUNNINGHAM.

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Communications

THE DRINK EVIL

Wollaston, Mass.

TO the Editor: While we deplore the present-day intemperance to which Dr. Harry Emerson Fosdick recently referred and to which reference is made in THE COMMONWEAL this week, what are we doing about it? One of the stock arguments against prohibition was that anyone could get liquor, anywhere, anytime during that period. Now, if people could find their way to abundant liquor in those days with only word-of-mouth information as to where it could be had, do we, in these days of returned saloons, state stores, liquor stores, cafés, and other liquor-selling-serving resorts, need all the printed and other advertising to which the liquor traffic is resorting? Anyone nowadays can show you to a saloon or other drinking place. The saloons themselves carry large, prominent, lighted and colored displays. Why, then, millions spent to advertise what they sell? Why is the traffic specially bent on winning trade among young people, particularly young women? The greatest single factor toward greater temperance in this country today would be to make an end to all paid advertising of the products of the liquor traffic.

Of course, the answer to these questions is supplied by the traffic itself. It admits that a large volume of business was lost through the influence of prohibition. It is determined to overcome that loss and to sell more liquor than ever. And we know what that means.

To permit every possible thing to be done to increase the use of intoxicants, and then to bewail intemperance and auto-killings by partly intoxicated drivers, amounts almost to childishness—nay, worse.

H. J. MAINWARING.

Auriesville, N. Y.

TO the Editor: Your Week by Week paragraph on "The Drink Evil" in the June 12 number of THE COMMONWEAL, suggests the following observation.

You say, "We think, paradoxically as it may sound, that there is a social gain in the wider acceptance of drinking as such, since that makes temperance and abstinence matters of personal judgment and moral control, and not, as formerly in many cases, matter of rigid religious belief."

When the French missionaries, among whom were the eight North American Jesuit martyrs, were laboring among the Indians, their greatest obstacle to the spiritual, social and physical development of the Indians was precisely the drink evil. When the English, the Dutch and the French wished to rouse one tribe against another, or one group of Indians against a European civilizer, they distributed this stuff to the Indians, and all the spiritual work of the missionaries was absolutely destroyed—the Indians sinking into every form of the most shameful debaucheries. After a winter of hardest toil in the forest and streams, hunting the beaver and other fur-bearing animals for their precious pelts, the Indians would sell all the fruits of the laborious winter for a few quarts of whisky. In some cases the very officers of the government itself were the chief beneficiaries of this nefarious traffic, they having a monopoly of the whisky trade. Physically also this traffic brought about the degradation of the whole Indian people.

In the July number of the *Auriesville Pilgrim*, published four times in the year by Reverend Peter Cusick, S. J., the director of the Shrine of the North American Martyrs at Auriesville, New York, appears a letter from a priest in which he declares that through the intercession of the North American Martyrs he had three instantaneous cures of the drink habit. Within ten days of the appearance of this letter, Father Cusick was receiving one, two, sometimes as many as six letters a day from all parts of the United States, asking for Masses, novenas and prayers to the martyrs against this evil. These letters continue coming to the Father to the present day. This novena has been recommended to many spiritual directors of souls, who have urged it on their spiritual clients, and the responses have been the same as those mentioned above.

No doubt the very anguish which the martyrs themselves suffered in their efforts in combating this evil is the reason why now they are so ready to lend their assistance.

Perhaps while the "common sense and decency" mentioned in your Week by Week remarks will "intervene to control the situation" and check the "revolt," a little spirit of good-will on the part of the victim and a little spirit of confidential prayer will do a great deal too.

T.

HURRAH FOR OUR SIDE

Brooklyn, N. Y.

TO the Editor: Kind friends called my attention to "Hurrah for Our Side," which appeared in the only copy of THE COMMONWEAL I have missed reading in years. My critic, and he was not the only one, misconstrued the editorial as a defense of the morality of the Italian-Ethiopian conflict. Better men than either of us have refrained from passing judgment on such a question.

What riled me most was that the views expressed in my article were held up as a curious example of exaggerated (though natural) nationalistic feeling. That's a sentiment that even my best Italian friends have never attributed to me. Frankly, I think that my critic purposely attempted to swat my views in tabloid style (something unusual for your excellent publication) in order to avoid the real point at issue. For that I don't blame him. It is very possible that he knows Saint Thomas ("De Regimine Principum") and Tarparelli D'Azeglio better than I do. If that is true his attack was prudent though hardly scholarly.

I never thought before this that it was impossible to remain in Brooklyn and discuss theories of government. Lest THE COMMONWEAL should have any doubts about my personal feelings in the matter, I wish to assure it that Mr. Genova is perfectly content to stay in this borough, and preferably in Canarsie, as long as his superiors have no objections.

REV. VINCENT O. GENOVA.

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Books

"The Holy Duke"

The Greatest of the Borgias, by Margaret Yeo. Milwaukee: The Bruce Publishing Company. $2.50.

FRANCISCO, a ragged priest in a travel-stained black habit, and Francisco de Borgia, Duke of Gandia, Grandee of Spain, Knight of Calatravera, Master of Horse to the Empress, once Viceroy of Catalonia, cousin, friend and familiar of Charles V, Holy Roman Emperor and Most Catholic King of Spain, were one and the same man. Spain knew him for many years as "the holy Duke," Rome knew him as the General of the Jesuits, and we know him as Saint Francis Borgia. It is his life that is the subject of Margaret Yeo's latest book, "The Greatest of the Borgias." Perhaps because her previous studies of Don Juan of Austria and Saint Francis Xavier have compelled her to soak herself in the background, both of time and place, she has achieved a most happy result.

The bones of biography are swiftly summarized. Born to a "station of life" amongst the highest, disregarding childhood, he spent eighteen years in the world. The peer of kings, "the tide of pomp that beats upon the high shore of this world" was his by right and together with it love, marriage and parenthood. In prime, weighing time and eternity in a balance, he chose eternity and, forsaking all things, spent sixteen years in religion. God demanded of him an apostolate rather than the contemplative quiet which he sought and only through pain and suffering did he gain, in his last years, that union of both which Saint Thomas holds to be the most perfect. Whether in the world or in religion he is a perfect example of the "just man," perfectly integrated, rendering all things their due weight and fulfilling always the duties of his station. In him there is united both an exceptional concatenation of events and an extraordinary synthesis of time.

His name is famous, perhaps we should say infamous, in Christendom. He sprang from a race which was the very heart of a corrupt Renaissance that gnawed at the structure of Christendom, weakening it and sowing the seeds of the Lutheran heresy. Yet it touched him not at all, his life in the world was blameless, and he lived to join a Society whose reason for being was the combat of the heresy brought on by the evil ways of such as his forebears, and to take a foremost part in that Counter-Reformation which restored balance to the Church. In this service he was indefatigable and went to his death having done much to purge the dross which clogged and to lay the foundations of a sound future. Thus in himself he was a bridge and a transition exemplifying the "wonderful works of God," and Margaret Yeo is correct in terming him "the greatest of the Borgias." He tips the scales against Alexander, Juan, Cesare and Lucrezia.

In the stream of history as in his person, he stands at the parting of the ways. His career in the world was lived out in the twilight of the old dispensation, in the shadow of Ferdinand and Isabella who won Spain for Christendom from the Moors, in the sunlight of Charles under whose sway Europe was for the last time united in

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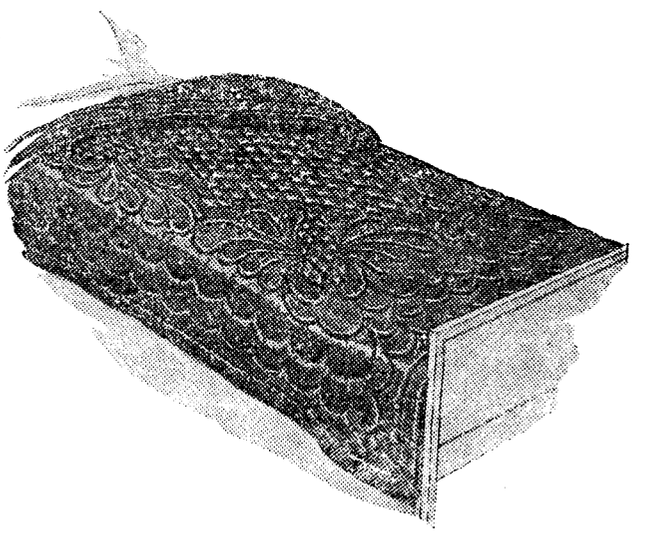

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faith. The world of his youth and his splendor was, for all its corruption and its human weakness, a Catholic world into which the spirit of division had not entered. He entered religion as a common soldier of Christ to combat that principle of spiritual disunion which had gained strength during his lifetime, and to assist in that reform of Catholic life which was a prerequisite to any hope of success. The world he strove with as Third General of the Society of Jesus was the world of Peter Canisius and Edmund Campion, one of struggle. Where corruption was largely cured but heresy was entrenched. The abrupt change in his own mode of life was but a type and mirror of the changes then wrought in civilization.

He stands today as an inspiration to clergy and laity alike, equally in tune with either. He had an integrity of character, a realization of values, particularly useful today; his realistic mind saw that the supernatural was the most natural, the most practical way of life. Mrs. Yeo may be congratulated for having written a book interesting in itself, but even more interesting in its implications.

BRYAN M. O'REILLY.

Medieval Frailties

Five Centuries of Religion, by G. G. Coulton. Volume III, Getting and Spending. New York: The Macmillan Company. Cambridge University Press. $12.50.

MUCH water has flowed under many bridges since Professor Coulton began to write, and most of us know that while the Middle Ages do not quite sleep in alabaster their rest is also not that of the more barbarous demons. It is a perennial advantage to the historian—this refusal to idealize anything save the New Jerusalem. And so let us sincerely regret that the task of writing what Coulton has written proved the lot not of a Catholic scholar as wise and serene as the Abbé Brémond, but of an English Protestant who at least at first was an anti-monkish pamphleteer. Too bad that anybody should have said some of the things Coulton has said! Nevertheless his work as a whole, allowance having been duly made for all its bias, its occasional slovenliness and its bibliographical eccentricity, is unmistakably beneficent.

A certain nineteenth-century tendency to swallow medievalism whole was a serious Catholic intellectual handicap. Far too many romanticized their approach to the study of religion as operative in the realms of social ethic, art and philosophy. It was often forgotten that one underlying structural weakness of medieval society—the too hasty absorption of the Germanic tribes and the resultant weakening of intellectual authority—is a fundamental cause of very much evil that has happened since. And the repudiation of everything achieved by Christian humanism was a historical and mental whopper for which we are particularly today paying a heavy price. On the other hand, the goodness of the Middle Ages abides the more securely for having been winnowed down from the tares. Who cannot but dwell in awe of the frankness and sanity of medieval mysticism as a whole, or fail to wonder still at the veritable collective miracles the era

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achieved? Intellectually if not politically it was the most democratic time of which we know. Nor was the ideal aristocrat of that democracy short of the very noblest stature.

At any rate, here is a new Coulton book. It has to do with the financial problems and methods characteristic of medieval monasticism. The chronicle and commentary Dr. Coulton provides leave a decidedly bad taste in the mouth. Hundreds of citations concerning the business methods of Christ's followers during the Middle Ages reveal cupidity, fraud and helplessness in the face of economic problems. Insecurity steadily menaced the existence of even the most austere retreats from the pitfalls of the world, and often it caused the ruin of foundations which had begun with the very best prospects. Again and again recourse to shady dealing seemed the only way out of an impasse, and harassed men took it. Remarks on these conditions are not wanting in the best-known of medieval books; and I suppose the chief value of what Coulton writes may lie in the evidence it accumulates to bear out familiar statements by Dante and Saint Francis.

But one would have liked a better, more objective presentation of the other side of the story. We are, it is true, in a manner recompensed by the introduction to the book. In this there speaks a wiser, more judicious Coulton than we have known previously. The excellent point is made that however high may be a man's spiritual ideals, his struggle to maintain himself on a par with it will hardly be unflaggingly successful. If the historian would bear in mind that his dream of objectivity is exposed to similar lapses, mankind might eventually hope that the story of its past would be put down ultimately with some, at least, of the fierce and balanced honesty which makes the Old Testament so unrivaled a book.

GEORGE N. SHUSTER.

Knowing Paris

From a Paris Garrett, by Richard Le Gallienne. New York: Ives Washburn. $2.50.

FOR MY next trip to Paris, the first thing to go into my bag will be this book. It graphically combines the many colorful aspects of life in Paris in short interesting passages. Guide books may satisfy some people in their hurried trips through streets and museums, but for those who seek the soul of Paris such a directory falls far short of the goal. In Mr. Le Gallienne's book all one has to do is run a finger down the contents headings to find that which will suit his fancy for the day.

Let us take for instance the little street where he stayed, La Rue Servandoni. He tells us that here D'Artagnan, the hero of Dumas, actually lived, and all around that neighborhood was the stamping-ground of other characters of that famous novel. Or his portrayal of French love for its native heath in the passage, "The Sacred Soil of France."

Would that we all could have the privilege of dropping in on him, but that would be impossible, so the next best thing is to listen to him through this book, and to follow in his footsteps through the streets of Paris.

P. H. WILLIAMS.

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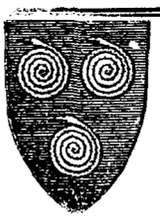
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Criticism of Lincoln

A Southern View of the Invasion of the Southern States and the War of 1861-65, *by Captain S. A. Ashe. Raleigh.* $1.50.

THIS scholarly and ably written work will do much to make Americans take a sane and reasonable view of Abraham Lincoln. Although the book deals with many phases of the Civil War in an enlightening manner, its principal contribution to the field of American history lies in the criticism, and I feel justified criticism, of Lincoln. Like Edgar Lee Masters, Dr. Ashe, who is well known as a Southern historian, believes that if it had not been for Lincoln, the entirely useless Civil War would have been avoided. It is shown how Lincoln made slavery the excuse for the war, and that it was not the cause of the conflict. And it seems that Lincoln had no legal right to wage war on the South. Dr. Ashe tells us that when the fighting started a bill to legalize it failed to pass the Senate in fifteen attempts. "Then after twenty months of warfare, the Supreme Court of the United States said Congress had no power delegated to it to make war upon a state, and that the President had no authority to make war." No one really interested in American history can afford to miss this outstanding monograph.

Franciscan Missions

African Adventure, by Father James, O. M. Cap. Dublin: The Father Mathew Record Office. 3*s.* 6*d.*

SINCE the depression the Irish Capauchins have taken over as missionary territory several small districts near Cape Town and a huge virgin country in the dead center of southern Africa, Barotseland in North Rhodesia. Father James, acting for his Provincial, inspected the territories last year and writes this short book from his own notes and from the notes of the Franciscans who went out to open the missions. He writes very well indeed, and tells in thoroughly interesting fashion the things one would naturally inquire about—about the missionary idea and method, the Capuchin Order, Africa, the African people and his own strenuous journey. This will be one of the last accounts of the first impress of the Church in Africa.

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